

## STAFF REPORT

To: Mayor and City Council Date: February 23, 2010

From: Roderick Simmons, Director Prepared by: Diane Ruggiero  
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts Superintendent of Cultural Arts

Via: Gary Jackson, City Manager

Subject: National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Mayors' Institute on City Design (MICD) 25<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary Initiative Grant Program

Summary Statement: Selection of a competitive project that meets the grant requirements with a plan to provide the matching funds required. Various groups, including the HUB and the Downtown Master Plan Cultural Arts Implementation team, have come forward with proposals on projects.

Review: Each year, the NEA offers numerous grants in a variety of art and design categories. This year, the MICD grant has been created to showcase and celebrate the goals of the MICD and that arts and culture contribute greatly as core components in building livable and sustainable communities. Applications will be reviewed on the basis of artistic excellence and artistic merit.

The NEA anticipates awarding fewer than 15 grants. Organizations must designate a grant request in one of the following categories: \$25,000, \$50,000, \$100,000, \$200,000, or \$250,000. All grants require a nonfederal match of at least 1 to 1 dollar for dollar.

Projects may include planning, design, and arts engagement activities such as:

### Planning

- The planning of arts districts.
- The mapping of cultural assets and related developmental potential.
- The promotion of the arts and artists as integral components of community life and essential to community planning.
- The exploration of innovative approaches that maximize the economic growth of a community's creative sector.

### Design

- The promotion of design and the arts to enhance livability and as central components for the development and enhancement of new or existing public spaces -- such as parks, public buildings, libraries, memorials, streets -- through architecture, streetscapes, pedestrian bridges, neighborhood gateways, and sustainable parks and landscapes.
- Design competitions or charettes (design workshops) for arts or cultural vitality projects.
- The revitalization of neighborhoods that focuses on preserving the historic value and heritage of existing buildings and/or the adaptive reuse of structures to be used as cultural facilities or for mixed use purposes (i.e., for cultural facilities and other entities). This includes affordable housing for artists and others, artist studios or live/work space, and entrepreneurial new creative sector business development.

### Arts Engagement

- The transformation of community sites into public spaces for cultural activities.
- Projects which contribute to cultural vitality and a sense of place such as innovative community engagement projects, including festivals, community-wide celebrations, outdoor exhibitions, and learning opportunities; and the commissioning of temporary

- and/or permanent site-specific public art such as murals and sculptures, sculpture gardens, and waterfront art walks.
- New media or technology projects that connect citizens to cultural activities or engage them in participating in city planning or design projects.

Deadlines:

**March 15, 2010:** Statement of Interest which is to include:

- Budget Outline (No pre-award costs are allowable in the project budget. Project costs that are incurred before the project start date will be removed from the project budget.)
- Major Project Activities
- Goals
- Schedule (by month or by quarter)
- Partners, key organizations, individuals, and works of art that will be involved in the project.
- Target community (impact, past experience, number served, etc.)
- Plans for promoting, publicizing, and/or disseminating the proposed project, as appropriate
- Plans for monitoring the project and assessing the degree to which you achieve your goals
- Evidence of impacts achieved

**April 8, 2010:** Invitation to Apply Issued

**May 10, 2010:** Formal Application Deadline

Project Start Date: between July, 2010 – December 2010

Project Completion Date: one year after start date

Staff have been approached by multiple groups, which includes the HUB and the Downtown Master Plan Cultural Arts Implementation task team with potential project options for City Council to consider.

### **Downtown Master Plan Option**

The Downtown Master Plan Cultural Arts Implementation task team has asked the City to review possible projects from the Downtown Master Plan including the creation of an arts alliance, the creation of an artist resource center, and the planning of Pack Square Cultural District, all of which would be supported by the grant. However, the matching funds have not yet been identified.

### **HUB Creative Cluster Option**

The HUB through its Creative Cluster leadership is asking to apply for this NEA grant as the single proposal the "HUB Creative Cluster. 1.29.10." to represent the City of Asheville. They would like the city to be the "sponsor" and applicant but HUB would provide the matching funds for the project's Arts & Culture Cluster initiative.

### **Public Art Board Projects Option**

Staff have identified other possible projects as outline in the departments master plan for a direct grant. The Public Art Board has endorsed two public art projects: the Reed Creek Greenway gateway on Broadway as part of the Public Artist of the Year and Riverbend Park (at Wal-Mart). Both of these projects have \$25,000 each in privately raised funds that would be used for the one-to-one match. The completion of these projects would support the PRCA Master Plan goal #11 (Support public expectation for public art of the highest quality with public engagement) and goal #13 (Create a coherent,

comprehensive, and exciting municipal collection of public art). The public art fund did not receive an allocation for FY10 and this grant would help the projects move forward.

This action complies with the City's Council Strategic Operating Plan in that it supports Job Growth & Community Development.

This action complies with the Parks, Recreation, Cultural Arts and Greenways Master Plan in that it provides opportunity to partner with community groups to implement community master plan priorities.

Pros:

- The grant provides support for a variety of projects and activities;
- The arts are an integral part of the City of Asheville;
- Provides additional funding for a project or activity.

Cons:

- The City has limited ability to match funds and will be fiscal responsible for private funds not raised.
- The City has limited resources to administer a federal grant;
- The application deadline is March 15, 2010.

Fiscal Impact: The current FY 2009/2010 operating budget does not include matching funds for an NEA grant. If City Council authorizes the City to submit an application for a grant and the City is a successful applicant, matching funds ranging from \$25,000 to \$250,000 would be required, depending on the grant project submitted.

Staff's plan for identifying necessary matching funds is to require the appropriate community group seeking to partner with the City for a grant project to raise matching funds through private donations. To the extent that such private matching funds are raised, there would be no fiscal impact to the City. If private funds are not raised, however, the financial impact to the City would range from \$25,000 to \$250,000, depending on the grant project submitted. The City could further be impacted if the program or project for which grant funds are being sought is on-going in nature, requiring continued operating support from city sources.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that City Council provide guidance on whether to should submit a grant and for what project from the options identified.

Attachments:  
(1) resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 10- \_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION TO SUBMIT A STATEMENT OF INTEREST FOR THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR  
THE ARTS MAYORS' INSTITUTE ON CITY DESIGN PROGRAM GRANT

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WHEREAS, the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts Department presents for consideration the statement of interest criteria and applicable deadlines; and

WHEREAS, the grant, if awarded requires a non federal dollar for dollar match; and

WHEREAS, the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts Department presents for consideration the grant criteria; and

WHEREAS, the approval will allow for City staff to meet the required deadlines;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE  
THAT:

City staff may submit a statement of interest for the NEA Mayors' Institute on City Design  
Program Grant.

Read, approved and adopted this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of February, 2010.

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CITY CLERK

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MAYOR

Approved as to form:

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CITY ATTORNEY